

Stein

winemakers: Dr. Ulrich Stein and Philip Lardot

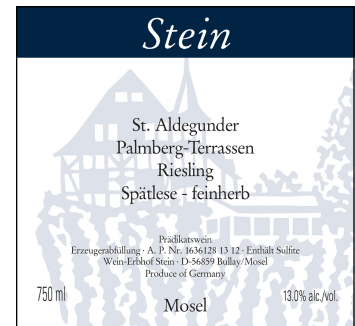
practicing organic | certain wines non-filtré and low SO2

country: Germany

appellation: Lower Mosel (yet not Terrassen Mosel)

village: Alf and St. Aldegund

main vineyard(s): Alfer Hölle, St. Aldegunder Palmberg and Himmelreich



summary: Ulli (and now his young protégé Philip Lardot) farms meaningful parcels of land that have a few important things in common: They are not easy to work. They are commercially unknown and therefore (most likely) barely financially viable. Finally, and most importantly: *Ulli has to love them*. Stein is more than a winemaker – he is a passionate advocate for the traditional, steep, slate vineyards of the Mosel. Winemaking with Ulli is refreshingly light on “style,” on some idea projected into the vineyards, and more about what the vineyards say to him. Certainly there is a focus on wines that are dry; lightness and zip are more important than gobs of fruit. Cut is more important than size. One last note of importance, due to his belief in the importance of old vines the family never grafted to phylloxera-resistant rootstock in the 70s when this practice was the norm. So Ulli now has a profound collection of ungrafted vines, farming around 10% of the ungrafted vines in all of Germany. In 2016 the young Philip Lardot moved to the Mosel and was taken in by Ulli. Philip found a mentor and a deep connection to the Mosel in Ulli Stein; meanwhile Ulli found just the right person to carry the torch at this curious estate. Philip, of course, makes his own Mosel wines in a style close to the style of Stein’s “Ohne”, Ulli will phase out these wines to give Lardot more space. Thus the 2019 “Ohne” is the last still “Ohne” Stein will release.

size: 6.5 hectares

key grape varieties: Riesling, Pinot Noir along with some Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Sangiovese

soil: slate

vine age: 60+ yo vines for basic wines; Palmberg has 90+ yo ungrafted vines; Alfer Hölle has a collection of ungrafted vines planted in 1900 – this is the 2nd oldest producing vineyard in the Mosel.

vineyard work: practicing organic

vinification: All grapes are harvested by hand, generally in multiple passes. The entry-level wines are often comprised of the first selection through the vineyards. The percentage of grapes destemmed depends on the vintage and specific wine. A pneumatic press is used and all juice is gravity fed to settle before fermentation. The basic wines brought into the U.S. (Blauschiefer Trocken and Weihwasser) are mostly fermented in traditional 1000L Mosel Fuders (most of which are 50 to 100 years old), though stainless steel may also be used depending on vintage and quantities. All wines start fermentation spontaneously; entry-level wines may be inoculated after 30% of the sugars have been fermented. A small amount of SO2 is added around three weeks after fermentation ends. Total SO2 is 25-75ppm for the basic wines depending on the vintage. None of the wines are fined; the basic wines are filtered using diatomaceous earth after 3-12 months on the lees. The higher-end wines may see lower sulfur and/or not be filtered at all. The “Ohne” (meaning “without” in German) wines have no SO2 added and are not filtered and spend longer time on the lees.

Vineyards and Wines:

Weihwasser Feinherb – name translates to “Holy Water;” off-dry; mostly from vines in the St. Aldegunder Klosterkammer

Blauschiefer Trocken – sourced from old vines (up to and over 75+ yo ungrafted vines) in and around the St. Aldegunder Himmelreich

St. Aldegunder Himmelreich – Stein’s “1er Cru” vineyard with 100% ungrafted vines; avg 75+ yo vines and mostly blue slate

St. Aldegunder Palmberg Terrassen – an ancient wall of 100% ungrafted vines; avg 90+ yo. Stein’s Grand Cru vineyard.

Alfer Hölle – below Ulli’s mountaintop home, two distinct sites including a tiny 0.2ha vineyard, with 1,200 ungrafted vines planted in 1900

Rosé – steep slate soils; direct press and saignée; Pinot Noir with approximately 20% Cabernet and Merlot; élevage all stainless

Rosé Secco – steep slate soils; second fermentation in tank; Pinot Noir with approximately 20% Cabernet and Merlot, élevage all stainless

Spätburgunder “Red Light” – steep slate soils; around 10 yo Pinot Noir vines; élevage in old Fuder

Spätburgunder “Redvolution” – steep slate soils; around 20 yo Pinot Noir vines; élevage in old Fuder; no SO2 added

Spätburgunder “Wächter” – steep slate soils; among the oldest Pinot Noir vines in the Mosel at 30+ yo; élevage in old barriques

Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot – steep slate soils; sourced from multiple vineyards throughout the village; 25 yo vines; élevage in old barriques

“Ohne” Sekt – zero SO2 Riesling; extended élevage in old barrels; méthode traditionnelle, no dosage, single vintage